<u>IN THE CLAIMS</u>:

Please cancel claims 11, 14 and 22 without prejudice or disclaimer, amend claims 10 and 15-21, and add new claims 23-26 as follows:

1-9.   (Cancelled)

10.   (Currently Amended) A document processing system comprising:

an input unit for reading <u>an image of a hardcopy document and for reading information from</u> a storing means <u>which is printed</u> on [[a]] <u>or embedded in the</u> hardcopy document;

<u>a detecting unit for detecting the storing means</u> ~~a document processing information extracting unit for extracting encoded document processing information,~~ which ~~includes~~ <u>stores document processing</u> information [[of]] <u>including</u> hardcopy document handling procedures to be executed in connection with the hardcopy document, <u>wherein</u>

~~a document processing information extracting unit for extracting encoded document processing information, which includes information of hardcopy document handling procedures to be executed in connection with the hardcopy document, stored in the storing means; and~~

<u>if the storing means is detected, the document processing information is extracted from the storing means, and at least one of the hardcopy document handling procedures is executed by a document processor using the document processing information extracted from the storing means,</u>

<u>if the storing means is not detected, a document form/format of the image of the hardcopy document is identified to extract corresponding document processing information from a document processing information dictionary kept within a document processing information database, and at least one hardcopy document handling procedure is executed by the document processor using the document processing information extracted from the document processing information dictionary</u>

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a document processor for executing said at least one hardcopy document handling procedure,

wherein said hardcopy document handling procedures include identifying document and identifying document format by determining whether a format of the hardcopy document is available in a database thereby executing another hardcopy document handling procedure on the hardcopy document.

11.   (Cancelled)

12.   (Previously Presented) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the document processor executes the document handling procedure by reading character strings on the document in accordance with the document processing information.

13.   (Previously Presented) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the document is a bill for payment or a commercial paper.

14.   (Cancelled)

15.   (Currently Amended) The document processing system as claimed in Claim [[14]] 10, said document processing information database is stored in the document processing system or is accessible via a network to which said document processing system is linked.

16.   (Currently Amended) The document processing system as claimed in Claim [[14]] 10, further comprising a document processing information defining unit for defining a new set of document processing information to be applied corresponding to the image of the hardcopy document if the retrieving unit can not retrieve any set of no corresponding document processing information is available in the database of the document provider.

17.   (Currently Amended) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 16, wherein the ~~set of~~ corresponding document processing information is selected from the database based upon a degree of similarity between a document format associated with the set of document processing information and [[a]] the image of the hardcopy document [[image]] entered through [[an]] the image input unit.

18.   (Currently Amended) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 16, wherein the system notifies [[the]] a document provider of the newly-defined set of document processing information so as to be included in the database or to be embedded in other documents by the document provider.

19.   (Currently Amended) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 10, comprising a document processing charge billing means for differentiating charges billed to [[the]] a document issuer according to whether document processing information is stored on the document.

20.   (Currently Amended) A document generating software product, comprising:

        a communication module for enabling a prospective document user wishing to have a hardcopy document made to notify a document generator of requirements regarding a desired hardcopy document layout and a desired hardcopy document handling procedure;

        a document layout making module for making a document layout according to the requirements from said prospective document user;

        a document candidate presenting module for presenting to the prospective document user document candidates made by the document layout making module;

        a document selecting module for letting the prospective document user select a document candidate out of the document candidates presented by the document candidate presenting module;

        a document processing information determining module for determining document processing information including information of the desired hardcopy document handling procedure;

a storing means module for selecting a storing means, encoding the document processing information, and for storing the encoded document processing information in the storing means; [[and]]

an inputting module for reading an image of the hardcopy document and for reading information from the storing means,

a detecting module for detecting said storing means which stores document processing information including hardcopy document handling procedures to be executed in connection with the hardcopy document,

a module for executing at least one hardcopy document handling procedure,

wherein if the storing means is detected, the document processing information is extracted from the storing means, and at least one of the hardcopy document handling procedures is executed by a document processor using the document processing information extracted from the storing means,

if the storing means is not detected, a document form/format of the image of the hardcopy document is identified to extract corresponding document processing information from a document processing information dictionary kept within a document processing information database, and at least one hardcopy document handling procedure is executed by the document processor using the document processing information extracted from the document processing information dictionary

~~a document processor for printing on or embedding the storing means on the hardcopy document, and for executing the desired hardcopy document handling procedure in connection with the hardcopy document,~~

~~wherein said desired hardcopy document handling procedure includes identifying document and identifying document format by determining whether a format of the hardcopy document is available in a database thereby executing another hardcopy document handling procedure on the hardcopy document.~~

21.   (Currently Amended) A software product for providing a hardcopy document comprising:

a module for printing on or embedding in the hardcopy document a storing means,

an inputting module for reading an image of the hardcopy document and for reading information from the storing means,

a detecting module for detecting ~~wherein~~ said storing means which stores ~~encoded~~ document processing information, ~~which includes information of~~ including hardcopy document handling procedures to be executed in connection with the hardcopy document, and ~~the hardcopy document is subject to and readable by a document processing apparatus for executing said at least one hardcopy document handling procedure in connection with the hardcopy document,~~

a module for executing at least one hardcopy document handling procedure,

wherein ~~said hardcopy document handling procedures include identifying document and identifying document format by determining whether a format of the hardcopy document is available in a database thereby executing another hardcopy document handling procedure on the hardcopy document~~

if the storing means is detected, the document processing information is extracted from the storing means, and at least one of the hardcopy document handling procedures is executed by a document processor using the document processing information extracted from the storing means,

if the storing means is not detected, a document form/format of the image of the hardcopy document is identified to extract corresponding document processing information from a document processing information dictionary kept within a document processing information database, and at least one hardcopy document handling procedure is executed by the document processor using the document processing information extracted from the document processing information dictionary.

22.   (Cancelled)

23. (New) A software product for providing a hardcopy document according to claim 21, wherein the document processing information database is included in the document processing system or in another system connected via a network.

24. (New) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the hardcopy document handling procedures include identifying the hardcopy document, identifying a document format of the hardcopy document, reading of entered items filled in an identified document format, posting an acknowledging seal on the hardcopy document, and cutting the hardcopy document.

25. (New) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the storing means is text, an one-dimensional, 2D or 3D bar code, a logo mark, a photograph, a watermark, or a holographic printed on the hardcopy document.

26. (New) The document processing system as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the storing means is a magnetic tape or an IC chip embedded in the hardcopy document.